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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS, TAIWAN'S NAME CHANGE
PLAN AND UN BID

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused their coverage February 7 on the DPP's government's recent move to remove the statues of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek from military compounds and parks around the island and its plan to remove military guards and MPs stationed at Chiang's mausoleum; on the diseased pork found in central and northern Taiwan; on the personnel reshuffle in the Presidential Office Monday evening; on Wang You-theng, founder of the debt-ridden Rebar Group; and on the speculation that KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou may be indicted soon for alleged embezzlement during his tenure as Taipei mayor.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's largest-circulation daily, discussed the remarks by U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Christensen in a written testimony recently on the cross-Strait situation. The article criticized the Blue camp for blocking the U.S. arms procurements budget and called for a popular vote to decide on Taiwan's national security. With regard to Taiwan's UN bid and name change plan, an editorial in the limited-circulation, conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" lashed out at the DPP government, calling its recent moves a kind of "Cultural Revolution" similar to the one launched by the late Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong. An editorial in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News," however, welcomed the DPP government's proposed UN bid under the name of Taiwan. End summary.

¶3. U.S.-Taiwan Relations

"Let Taiwan People Decide [Their] National Security"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 550,000] editorialized (2/7):

"U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Thomas Christensen said in written testimony that the United States was deeply concerned that China continues to deploy missiles and weapons systems aimed at Taiwan and that the United States took note that China has refused to give up the option of using military force against Taiwan. The United States would have to respond according to its duties laid out in the Taiwan Relations Act, he added. ...

"But over the past few years, confrontations between the ruling and opposition parties seem to have become a weak link of the 'Taiwan Relations Act (TRA).' According to the TRA, the United States will 'provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character,' and it is really rare and commendable that this rule remains valid now, even given the impact caused by the Sino-U.S. 'August 17 Communiqué' signed in 1982. To our great surprise, following the transfer of political power in 2000, the pan-Blue camp, which used to emphasize the extreme importance of Taiwan-U.S. relations, chose to join hands

with Communist China to restrain Taiwan after it became the opposition party. The pan-Blue camp has repeatedly blocked the [U.S.] arms procurements budget, even though the arms deal has been approved and pushed by the United States. Given such a development, Taiwan's national defense will become vulnerable and short on defense capability. [Should this be the case,] what else will the TRA be able to do?

"In consideration of Taiwan's stalled pace with regard to the arms procurements, AIT Taipei Director Stephen Young held a press conference last October in which he urged the Legislative Yuan to pass the arms procurements budget in fall 2006 in an attempt to resolve the military imbalance in the Taiwan Strait. Young added that, as Taiwan's most important security partner, the United States believes it is necessary to state its position and let the Taiwan people clearly understand the U.S. position. Young also earnestly exhorted: For the Taiwan people's sake, please pass the arms procurements budget!

"Nonetheless, those who do not care about Taiwan's security continued to oppose the arms procurements just for opposition's sake. Some people thus proposed that a popular vote be held on the stalled arms procurements, so that the public can decide on the issue free of the severe struggles between political parties. In other words, let Taiwan people defend the island. Honestly speaking, this might work as a resolution. ..."

14. "Taiwan's Name Change Plan and UN Bid

A) "The DPP's Cultural Revolution"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (2/7):

"In China, Chairman Mao launched a 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' to get rid of the 'olds' - in other words, anything that PLAN AND UN BID

connected the Chinese people to their past, and replace the culture of the Chinese people with a new communist ideology. The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) is doing much the same with Taiwan. It started innocently enough with 'common sense' changes like putting the name 'Taiwan' on the Republic of China passports, and as we predicted, this was only the thin end of the wedge. ...

"The DPP had bigger things in its sights, namely the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall. This impressive structure was built to preserve the memory of the founder of modern Taiwan. ... No one cares about the DPP and their narrow, inward-looking ideology. All the DPP has done for Taiwan's international reputation is to blacken it by their thuggish tactics in the Legislature. ... The DPP, with their narrow interpretation of history and their Cultural Revolution, have no concept of Chiang's important role in keeping Taiwan free and opening the way to a more democratic future."

B) "Citizens Vote Needed for our U.N. Bid"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] editorialized (2/7):

"We support the proposal raised by lawmakers of the governing Democratic Progressive Party in the past week to launch a national campaign for a citizen's vote on whether our country should use the name 'Taiwan' in an application to enter the United Nations. ... Securing membership for Taiwan and our people in the U.N. and affiliated international organizations has since been a priority task of Taiwan's democratic movement and the DPP and has been pursued with various strategies and little concrete results by both the KMT government of Taiwan-born former President Lee Teng-hui, and by the DPP government of President Chen Shui-bian. ...

"If we cannot enter the U.N. under the official and anachronistic constitutional moniker, there is no reason why we should not simply use 'Taiwan,' which is the best and simplest way to indicate our national identity. ... Instead of continuing to allow itself to be paralyzed by Taiwan's political divisions, the DPP leadership appears to have finally realized that there are numerous issues that offer the opportunity to build 'center-left' majorities by combining

the affirmation of Taiwan's national identity and democracy with promoting a national bottom-up debate and citizen participation."

YOUNG